AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An oil lubricated rolling bearing device, comprising:

an inner ring;

an outer ring;

a plurality of rolling elements placed between the inner ring and the outer ring; and

an oil inflow suppression member that partially blocks an oil inflow path on an inflow side of the device and that suppresses oil inflow between the inner ring and the outer ring, wherein a gap is always maintained between the oil inflow suppression member and at least one of the inner ring and the outer ring.

2. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 1, wherein

the rolling elements are tapered rollers,

the inner ring is a rotating ring that has a tapered raceway surface, and the outer ring is a fixed ring that has a tapered raceway surface,

the inner ring has a flange portion brought in contact with minor diameter end surfaces of the tapered rollers,

the oil inflow suppression member is a shield plate on the inner ring having a protrusion that protrudes radially outwardly of the ~~flange portion~~ inner ring such that a gap is maintained between an end of the shield plate and the outer ring,

the device further comprises a retainer that retains the tapered rollers, and

wherein the protrusion of the shield plate is ~~placed in a place having an interval~~ spaced from the retainer in an axial direction of the inner ring.

3. (Previously Presented) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the protrusion has an outside diameter that is not greater than an inside diameter of an end portion on a minor diameter side of the tapered raceway surface of the outer ring.

4. (Previously Presented) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 2, wherein a gap in the axial direction between the protrusion and the retainer is not greater than 3 mm.

5. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the ~~inner ring and the~~ shield plate is an integral part of the inner ring ~~are integrally formed~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 1, wherein

the rolling elements are tapered rollers,

the inner ring is a rotating ring that has a tapered raceway surface, and the outer ring is a fixed ring that has a tapered raceway surface,

the oil inflow suppression member is a shield plate on the outer ring having a protrusion that protrudes radially inwardly of an end portion on a minor diameter side of the tapered raceway surface of the outer ring,

the device further comprises a retainer that retains the tapered rollers, and

wherein the protrusion of the shield plate is ~~placed in a place having an interval~~ spaced from the retainer in an axial direction of the outer ring~~, and~~

~~a gap in the axial direction between the protrusion and the retainer is not greater than 3 mm~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the ~~outer ring and the~~ shield plate is an integral part of the outer ring ~~are integrally formed~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising [[:]] an oil outflow promotion structure for promoting outflow of oil that enters between the inner ring and the outer ring.

9. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the rolling elements are tapered rollers, ~~and assuming that~~ wherein a number of the tapered rollers is z, wherein a mean diameter of the tapered rollers is DW_a, ~~and~~ wherein a pitch circle diameter of the tapered rollers is dm, and wherein the device ~~comprises an arrangement structure in which the z tapered rollers that~~ satisfies the following expression:

$$z \leq 0.85/(DW(\pi \cdot dm))$$

~~are arranged between the inner ring and the outer ring with a major diameter side of the tapered rollers facing toward an oil outflow side~~.

10. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the rolling elements are tapered rollers, and the oil outflow promotion structure comprises ~~the~~ a tapered raceway surface of the outer ring set in contact with the tapered rollers at a contact angle of not smaller than 25°.

11. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 8, wherein ~~the oil inflow suppression member comprises a member that partially blocks an opening located between the inner ring and the outer ring on an oil inflow side, and~~ the oil outflow promotion structure comprises a member that extends along an oil outflow direction on an oil outflow side.

12. (Previously Presented) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 9, wherein at least one of an end surface on the major diameter side of the tapered rollers and an end surface of a flange portion that is provided on a major diameter side of a tapered raceway surface of the inner ring and brought in contact with the end surface on the major diameter side of the tapered rollers is coated with a hard coating.

13. (Previously Presented) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 10, wherein at least one of an end surface on the major diameter side of the tapered rollers and an end surface of a flange portion that is provided on a major diameter side of a tapered raceway surface of the inner ring and brought in contact with the end surface on the major diameter side of the tapered rollers is coated with a hard coating.

14. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the rolling elements are balls, and the oil outflow promotion structure includes a portion of an inner surface of the outer ring that has a shape that widens toward an oil outflow side ~~in cross-section on an inner peripheral surface of the outer ring~~.

15. (Currently Amended) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 14, wherein at least one of ~~the~~ raceway surfaces on~~of~~ the inner ring and the outer ring and the balls is coated with a hard coating.

16. (New) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 6, wherein a gap in the axial direction between the protrusion and the retainer is not greater than 3 mm.

17. (New) An oil lubricated rolling bearing device, comprising:

an inner ring;

an outer ring;

a plurality of tapered rolling elements placed between the inner ring and the outer ring, wherein a number of the tapered rolling elements is z, wherein a mean diameter of the tapered rolling elements is DW, wherein a pitch circle diameter of the tapered rolling elements is dm, and wherein the device satisfies the following formula:

$$z \leq 0.85/(DW(\pi \cdot dm)).$$

18. (New) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a shield plate that is integrally formed on an oil inflow side of the inner ring, wherein the shield plate extends outward in a radial direction from the inner ring to partially block an oil

inflow path formed between the inner and outer rings, and wherein a gap is always maintained between an end of the shield plate and the outer ring.

19. (New) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device of claim 18, further comprising a retainer that keeps the tapered rolling elements evenly spaced around a circumference of the inner and outer rings, wherein an end of the retainer on the oil inflow side extends inward in a radial direction, and wherein an outer diameter of the shield plate is larger than an inner diameter of the end of the retainer on the oil inflow side.

20. (New) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a shield plate that is integrally formed on an inflow side of the outer ring, wherein the shield plate extends inward from the outer ring in a radial direction to partially block an oil inflow path formed between the inner and outer rings, and wherein a gap is always maintained between an end of the shield plate and the inner ring.

21. (New) The oil lubricated rolling bearing device of claim 20, further comprising a retainer that keeps the tapered rolling elements evenly spaced around a circumference of the inner and outer rings, wherein an end of the retainer on the oil inflow side extends inward in a radial direction, and wherein an inner diameter of the shield plate is smaller than an inner diameter of the end of the retainer on the oil inflow side.